

# REWRITE



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### WRITERS AND EDITORS ARE PARTNERS

In the last issue we discussed this theme from the writer's point of view. Now let us think about editors. Most writers feel that editors are a necessary evil. But if a writer's profession is a lonely one, so is that of the editor. This is a paradox only a few writers ever appreciate. He is surrounded by a staff. People are always coming in to see him, or he is checking with others. For him the mail is never anything but voluminous & it brings him both praise and squawks from a host of readers.

An editor is never alone. Yet his is perhaps a far lonelier profession than that of the writer. This is because he is the "contact man" between those who live, and those who write about living. To be objective, he can never completely identify himself either way. Many editors are highly creative, as they have to be to do a good job. But only a very few of them actually write themselves because their creative ability must be used on the wider, overall or long range basis—they are both creators and critics, in a word they are editors. They have to make the decisions. And that sets them apart, makes them lonely, and destroys to some degree the individual gift for creating.

An editor reflects both the interests of a group of readers and those of his magazine. A good editor not only gives his readers exactly what they want, he leaves them hungrily waiting for more. And, and this is something even many editors do not appreciate, he succeeds in gradually raising their standards. He has to, or he just doesn't stay there in the big office any more. Like the managers of big league baseball teams, for him the mortality rate is high. He has to keep improving his product, or someone else takes over and tries his hand. That was the real secret behind the decease of COLLIER'S and lots of other big circulation magazines. They had become stabilized, formulaized. They didn't move forward with the times. The only permanent thing in life is change.

Writers would be a lot smarter if they understood this psychological factor better & gave it more study. I mean if they realized how often the cruel editor who is seemingly the salt in their wounds, in reality shelters them from the harsh winds of public caprice, guiding them in their adaptation to it. That is another factor that makes the editor's job a lonely one. He has to be way out in front of the crowd. When you read the December issue of his book, he is already designing his July issue. He has to foresee a world-shaking cataclysm before it happens & have already reacted to changes in thinking and feeling long before the masses of people are even aware of them.

If a criticism of editors can be made and be thoroughly substantiated, it is that too

many editors of large circulation magazines today do too much of their editing from the plush Madison Avenue offices they all would like to occupy and sometimes do. They ought to depend less on reader surveys, and get out more and meet the folks. It takes more than letters to the editor and statistics to get the feel of the big wide world of today and of readers who are people like themselves.

A good editor, even more than the writers whose copy he buys, must have a fine grounding in the whole of life, not just his particular phase of it. However much you doubt it, the peoples of the world are continually moving closer together. They are becoming more & more conscious of one another. Travelers returning from Europe constantly comment that this is far truer there today than in the United States. Co-operation is a very big word, co-operatives are big business in Europe as well as the Scandinavian nations. You may not like the word if you are a businessman. But the onrush of scientific development is forcing businessmen and scientists alike to see the necessity of knowing a lot about as much of this complex civilization, this sophisticated culture we have built as possible. The man who can't grasp the interrelation of fundamentals and the relatively similar attributes and characteristics of a number of trades and professions, simply is not likely to survive.

This is something every editor can understand. He has to deal in words, pictures, & types. He has to blend into an articulate & efficient medium of communication men & machines. Particularly in the smaller periodicals, he has to be publisher, the circulation and business manager, and on occasions typesetter, as well as editor. The greatest danger for this kind of editor is that he'll lose breadth of vision and perspective, and let his magazine deteriorate into a community scandal or puff sheet. It is a wonder, I think, that some of the editors do as serious and competent job as they do.

A writer has a right to expect that an editor will deal honestly with him, and treat his mss. as ambitious and sincere efforts to please him. He should earnestly try to give them a quick and intelligent report. So far as he can he should treat writers as individual persons and avoid the insult of anonymous & impersonal rejection. (In the same manner a writer should never forget that most editors are human, under-paid and constantly driven by a terrifying multiple set of dead-lines.)

Editors can never forget that they sell a product. They sometimes forget that it subsists only as it creates a demand among people, and that strange as it may seem writers do occasionally read the magazines they aim to sell to. Both writers and editors should remember that they are two ends of the same string. In the vivid image of Pres. Eisenhower you can pull, but never push, a string.

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|                  |                           |                |
|------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| <u>FIND AND</u>  | <u>William E. Harris,</u> | <u>KEEP</u>    |
| <u>WRITE</u>     | <u>Elva Ray Harris,</u>   | <u>AMERICA</u> |
| <u>THE TRUTH</u> | <u>Editors.</u>           | <u>FREE</u>    |

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### HOW MUCH DO WE VALUE OUR FREEDOM?

The number one danger to human freedom in the world today is inflation. This is true because on the one hand it stems from economic and political immorality, and on the other inflation sweeping too far results in hunger, which in turn creates the danger of war. It is when dictators and unskilful politicians, experiencing the pinch of their reckless mismanagement, fear reprisals from the people they exploit, that war becomes imminent.

The number one cause of inflation today is the unwillingness of governments on the national, state and smaller levels, to balance their budgets, or refrain from spending every cent they can extract from the tax-payers' pockets. This is what sends costs sky-high and causes labor to seek vainly to even things up by demanding higher pay & ending with gains that create still more inflation. A vicious cycle that never ends.

When Congress, a parliament or legislature appropriates money without any reference to how much may probably be available, that is economic irresponsibility. Until tax-payers require their representatives to operate on double-entry system of bookkeeping and maintain credit balances in their checkbooks, inflation will always exist. And consequently the great mass of people will be hard pressed by the high cost of just living on a get-by basis.

When politicians pass laws and make deals to keep themselves in office or increase the luxury of their own living, that is political immorality. The entire world has indeed

been shocked by the cupidity and callous disregard of their public duty by a few selfish labor leaders. But congressmen have recently appropriated themselves large increases in salaries and many fringe benefits including new and unnecessary office furniture, extraordinary secretarial help, which they often recruit from their own families. Newspapers refer frequently to recess "junket" expeditions abroad by committees supposedly studying government installations. In Massachusetts our legislature has passed a law permitting its members, and other public officials, to retire on favorable disability pensions, yet still retain their posts and even run for re-election. That causes serious inflationary pressures on those who pay the taxes.

We of the free world should be rightfully concerned at the attempts of Communist dictators, hungry for even greater power, to be rulers of the entire globe. But a danger far more insidious and no less grave in its end-results, is the plundering of our own natural storehouse of security by those who think only of themselves, or are willing to adjust to a vicious and outworn system of self-perpetuation in public office.

If we do not care enough for our freedom, our life where men may still breathe the air of liberty, it will surely be taken away. A vacuum is not natural in nature. It doesn't remain constant long. Nature always works to wear down a contradiction in terms of physical realities. And so it does not matter a great deal whether our free world is destroyed by Communists intent on enslaving everyone on this planet, or by selfish & thoughtless "me firsters" from within. What is important is that the Free World must be preserved as man's most precious heritage. That requires that every man, woman and child in a democracy exercise his share of responsibility for maintaining it. That calls for a fine quality of devotion, loyalty and dedication. It makes essential an awakened, and aroused community ready to defend itself against those who attempt to weaken our glorious free land. And let us never forget that inflation is the shadow that stalks in front of the real danger from within or without.

### REWRITE TAKES PLEASURE....

REWRITE constantly tries to help writers. At the Maine Writers' Conference it awarded two free scholarship subscriptions. And at the University of New Hampshire Conference, in co-sponsorship with AMERICAN WEAVE, Loring Williams, editor and publisher, REWRITE again helped to award the Durham Chap Book.

This year a notable innovation developed. Three (3) separate chap books were awarded. Each will be the same size and of the usual distinguished appearance. They go to Thomas John Carlisle, James Dakin, and to Katherine Reeves, three promising younger poets.

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### What Kind of Service?

It is the contention of the National Writers Club that a literary agent is a sales representative of the author. It is his job to appraise the sales value of manuscripts he receives and to decide if he wants to be the intermediate agent who tries to fill the needs of editors and to make sales for writers. This in itself is a large and consuming task. It is also unequivocal, for it clearly defines the position of the agent. Either he makes sales or he goes out of business.

This clear-cut obligation of the agent has become confused in some instances. Advertising themselves solely as agents a number of individuals or firms are not agents in the sense that the Society of Authors' Representatives maintains is a primary requirement. This is that an agent should not conduct a literary service under the guise of being an agent. An agent may make suggestions for revision without charge, but if he does ask a fee then he becomes something other than just an agent.

A prominent literary critic made this statement to NWC: "I have always taken the attitude that agenting, revision or teaching can be a reliable service and represent a sound investment if the advertising is forthright and without equivocation. But what about the agent who offers sales only in his advertising, makes no mention whatever of editing or revision, and then springs such an offer on the client once the manuscript is in the office?"

"I find that in many cases the client will pay -- the fee in this case

being about \$250 for a book -- not because he came to buy an editing service, but because he regards it as an avenue to a sale. After all, isn't the man an agent? He must be, because his letterhead says as much. This is, in my book, a sneaky way to get business, and I feel that a client should know before he comes in the door what he is there for and what he can hope to obtain.

"The FTC takes the stand that if the person actually makes a sale once in a while, even though the bulk of his income is from other sources, he still may have the legal right to use the name 'agent'. Their legal staff is not fully certain of this, as no case has ever been made of it. Personally, I feel there are laws that transcend man-made statutes, and when one transgresses the rights and trusts of his fellow he is breaking that law."

There are at least six agents of this nature who advertise widely in writers' and other magazines. Numerous reports have been made to NWC regarding this practice, and in complaints voiced the revision or rewriting service paid for was inadequate or incompetent. In these instances, the clients not only were misled as to the position of the agent but they were also made to pay out money for unsatisfactory help.

NWC is preparing a complete report on this subject to be presented to the Federal Trade Commission. In order to avoid the impression of a tempest in a teapot, it is important that every member who has anything to contribute to this report should send it in promptly. As a first step in clarifying this subject, NWC has issued a report which also lists all known agents who also offer additional services for which a fee is required. This report, #68, is available to members on request.

#### COMMENT

Because this editorial (1) so explicitly states a policy REWRITE has expressed for many years, and because it sets out so well the forthright defense that the National Writers' Club has raised for years in behalf of writers, we have taken the liberty of reprinting this leader from AUTHORSHIP, the NWC Bulletin for members.

This incidentally is a policy not followed by writers' magazines, except The WRITER which does not accept advertising from literary agents or agents. Much of the confusion has built up because the writers' magazines and other general magazines have never insisted upon or policed this distinction. Yet it's the only way to lessen frauds & drive out incompetence.

This explains why Bill & Elva do not ever advertise WRITERS' COUNSEL SERVICE, or permit it be described as a literary agency.

At the Maine Writers' Conference this year an excellent pamphlet about agents was distributed by the Society of Authors' Representatives, 522 5th Ave., NYC 36. A list of the Society's members is given. None of these advertise. Some are among the most famous agents, others are smaller but no less able professional men & women. Several are leading play agents & others have their specialties, or work on a departmentalized basis. Those who seek the trade of new and unknown writers are conspicuously among the missing. But the majority of those listed usually will show an interest in new authors who can prove they have been selling a certain amount of material and material profitable enough to show an agent the necessary fees to make it worthwhile for him to handle the new account.

Some of these agents are not set up to serve inexperienced writers. Miss Annie Laurie Williams, for example, specializes in spectacular motion picture and theatrical sales. Her husband, Maurice Crain, on the other hand covers shorter fiction in the magazine field. The pamphlet gives a brief but adequate explanation of the standard practices of agents and what you can and cannot expect from an agent.

Everyone who hopes to do business or deal with an agent at all, should certainly request a copy of this pamphlet (send a stamped, self-addressed envelope as above.) As a public service Bill has been mailing the surplus copies he picked up at Ocean Park to the writers he has been in communication with since coming home from the Maine Writers Conference.

Edwin Geauque, N. H. publisher (Wake-Brook House), is executive secretary of the newly formed N. H. Covered Bridge Association.

Ballantine Books and Lion Books have agreed to stipulations by the FTC. They will no longer use new titles on reprints, unless notice of the change is clearly and conspicuously given on the front cover & title page.

Western Writers of America, Jim Kjelgaard, 1238 West Palo Verde Dr., Phoenix, Ariz., is compiling a juvenile anthology and the central theme is dogs. Stories by members, and only rights granted are for this anthology. All proceeds to the WWA. This is one way to finance a joint professional magazine.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.** This issue of REWRITE is unavoidably late. Subscribers will not lose any issues due them because of this fact.

Because of the above fact this issue carries more than the usual amount of news, much being unique & not printed by writers' mags.



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### FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

#### THE POET'S WORKSHOP

The first poem for discussion is;

#### POSTULATE

Madeline G. Salmon

Courage, for this is not my country.  
No fetish of fashion will I honor, only  
The vestiges of bone beneath the cloth.

The printed word is but the pressings  
Of wood-pulp stained with ink. If it were less  
It would be more. The jet propelled,  
The guided missile have only the look of death.

I come from the wind-washed rock, from the tangle  
Of ocean kelp, from the shadow of old trees.  
My toes grip sand and the grasses lick my legs.  
And the sound of speech is less to me  
Than the sound of leaves.

Olive Boynton: A deep and rather startling, serious poem: one that arouses the reader's immediate interest and curiosity. Actually, it seems to me not one poem, but four unrelated, personal tenets, each a little poem, shall we say, in itself. If I understand her meaning, there should not be a period after "country," but a shorter pause, perhaps a colon (as a clue), since the two following lines, declaring her nonconformity, explain the reason why she needs that courage. The charming last stanza, because of the sudden and complete change of key, should, I think, be separated from the preceding—perhaps by a row of dots...? Line 10 gives a jolt. It seems out of context. I feel that the activity of this idyllic being, who comes...from the shadow of old trees, should be expressed in a more figurative form in order to flow in harmony with the purely metaphorical sense of the poem as a whole.

Grace Scott: As suggested by the foreword, the poem is an intellectual origination. It seems to me that perhaps it might be accepted with no revisions in the quality magazines. Certainly it has nothing trite. "If it were less/ it would be more" is an intriguing idea. The last five lines are a complete poem to me, and thoroughly delightful. The poem as a whole stimulates thought.

The first part of the poem, however, puzzles me. It is all of the four meanings you can apply to the word "Postulate"; to assume without proof, to demand, a self-evident problem, a prayer; and this leads me to confusion. The "look of death" is to me cold, un-

moving, lifeless; jet propulsion and guided missiles are hot, swift-moving, with a life of their own. Perhaps omitting "only" would clarify this. Is "look" used for appearance of the thing itself or meaning "promise of death" to the "I" of the poem?

Eunice C. Neely: The last five lines are lovely, and make a complete poem for me. I love line 10; there is a point there that strikes home to anyone who knows the shore or sandy wastes. But I find the first part of the poem difficult. It just does not register for me. I fail to catch the significance of the title.

Mary Alden Campbell: An interesting poem with some especially satisfying lines. Why not omit lines 4, 5, 6, 7, and use them in a later poem? Is "vestiges" sufficient? Is it not rather the strong frame of bone, or the perfect symmetry, or some other words expressing value that she is aware of, honors, and derives courage from? I suggest "under" instead of "beneath" to get away from the iambic which is not good for free verse. In the last stanza with its fine picture and charming last two lines, I suggest keeping sand next to kelp, and the tree-shadow nearer to leaves. Like this:

I come from the wind-washed rock, from the tangle of ocean kelp;  
My toes grip sand and the grasses lick my  
I lie in the shadow of old trees.../legs;

The poem could be enriched by entering the mind of the person where I've used only the dots.

The title is too prosy. "Not my country." That would be the idea, stranger-in-a-foreign-land, alien. Perhaps there should be a better tie-up between the beginning and ending. The word "where" with verbs in the past tense might do it in the last three lines; "Where my toes gripped"...., etc.

Clarence O. Adams: This poem has a vagueness about it that is disconcerting. The first line does not seem to fit the thought of what follows. "If it were less/It would be more" doesn't seem to have meaning that is consistent.

Mr. Adams suggests rearranging the poems so that the second stanza comes last & reads:

The printed word is but the pressings  
Of wood-pulp stained with ink. The jet propelled,  
The guided missile have only the look of death.  
If it were less, what could be more?

Myra Burnham Terrell: This poem is fresh, meter is nicely varied, alliteration not overdone. I particularly like the last five lines. I am not sure I like the title. I do not like the first line, and am wondering about "If it

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were less/It would be more." I would add an "s" to shadow and omit "the" before grasses. It is all right to have the concluding line shorter. However, to me, it would tie in with "wind-washed rock...tangle of ocean kelp" if "and waves" were added.

Lawrence R. Holmes, Director-Editor of Poetry Public: "Postulate" both interests me and baffles me. It is in the modern idiom which is neither good nor bad in itself, except that its clichés are fewer and less worn down than one usually finds in romantic verse of the more dated modes. If the result is sometimes less obviously distinguishable from prose, it is not so bad as it might seem. "If it were less/It would be more" appears a trifle bald in expression, especially following the very matter-of-fact prose statement about the newspaper, nor is it quite original enough in idea to justify its baldness. The paradox is apparently supposed to express something profound, but I haven't fathomed the mystery as yet. However, the rest of the poem, while not arrestingly original, has a freshness that's appealing.

I am not certain that I have interpreted, to my mind, the idea right. That may be my fault. There is much to be gained in unpuzzling a fairly difficult poem, provided the effort is finally crowned with success, and provided the difficulty is inherent in the relationships between the parts (the parts being either the ideas or the images, or both) and not an obscurity deliberately imposed by the poet in order to create bafflement. The title does not help me as much as a good title should.

(Ed. Space limitations do not permit us to print the rest of Mr. Holmes' interesting & extended comments. But they will be forwarded to Miss Salmon.)

Ora Lee Parthesius: This author seems to have looked deeply into herself, out away at what she found there till she has the stark outline of her beliefs. As such, a sincere "self" poem, it should prove interesting, & challenging, to readers of poetry magazines. I find it so.

Elva: I would go along with the suggestion to omit lines 4, 5, 6, 7 except for "The printed word is but the pressings of wood pulp stained with ink." The jet and the guided missile seem to take away the singleness of purpose, but the reference to the printed word is necessary to tie in with lines 11 & 12. I should hate to see the verb tense changed in the last few lines, for it seems to me that these two "countries" both exist in the present. They cannot be located geographically, nor is the "I", who seems to be forced to enter one, able to leave the other. She inhabits them both simultaneously. What the author is saying, I think, is that words and speech are sometimes a betrayal of truth, and that the basic fundamentals of nature never

change, but ideas can be misinterpreted.

I agree with Mary Campbell's suggestion about the title, but her revision takes away some of the music, and brings the assonance in trees and leaves too close together. Also, trees are not inconsistent with the kelp and the sand and grasses.

Mrs. Terrell's suggestion to add "and waves" also takes away some of the music. The addition is not necessary for the author does not mean leaves in particular, but all of nature speaking through her own medium. Thus, "leaves" stands for "waves", "wind", "water" and all the other voices of nature.

Lawrence Holmes stated that the author is perhaps suggesting in "If it were less/ It would be more," that it would have been better if the newspaper had stayed in the tree. This interpretation is logical. Mary's suggestion to substitute "under" for "beneath" to get away from the iambic is good because it also gets us away from the too close illiteration.

The last five lines could stand alone, as more than one commentator observed, but with the omission of the first part of the poem, unfortunately, would go the possibility of a deeper interpretation.

The next poem for discussion is:

### AS SPARKS MIGHT FLY

By Gertrude Durand

From some dim source beyond our sight,  
Never ceasing day or night,  
Fragments of thought-stuff flit through the mind,

To vanish forgotten, leaving behind  
No trace of their being, as sparks might fly  
Into a void to glimmer and die,  
As all things die. Yet who shall say  
These wandering thoughts may not some day  
In the heart of a poet or mind of a seer,  
Transfigured, immortal, reappear?  
This is but dreaming, we cannot know;  
From darkness to darkness they come and go,  
Slipping across the consciousness—  
Fragments that neither burn nor bless.

Olive Boynton: This poem is lovely in sound and meaning. It shows deep thought. Line 10 is the climax. I should like to have the poem end with that encouraging thought.

Grace Scott: This is interesting, universal and freshly stated. It stirs the imagination takes one for a swift star-flight into "it-might-be." The beat is increasingly irregular until the last two lines are far from the original pattern set in the first two. Some feel that this is plain carping at small, unimportant things when the thought is the big thing. But I am told that editors will take the same thought in the more meticulous dress

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if they can get it. Since they have such big mountains of choice, we are limiting our acceptance chances if we do not try to fit our poems to the accepted patterns, or that set for ourselves in the first lines. In line 13 the number four beat is on the unstressed syllable of "consciousness" in order to achieve rime, and scan. I would suggest for a market The Kansas City STAR. It pays \$3 and sends a tearsheet.

Eunice C. Neely: It certainly does strike a true note! She has caught and expressed well what many of us have experienced. The one line that seems a bit awkward is line 3. I question the use of the word "stuff." It has a harsh sound to me. Line 10 is particularly good. The last two lines are the perfect climax.

Mary Alden Campbell: A great improvement on "The Heron." Good technique would require a relief from the long i rimes in the first 6 lines. "Burn nor bless" is too suggestive of "The Rosary." The title is well chosen. Especially liked line 12.

Madeline G. Salmon: It seems to me a thoughtful poem like this might better be condensed into unrhymed lines. This suggestion, of course, stems from personal preference. Except in songs or sonnets, I do not care for rhyme. And rhymed couplets simply jolt my ears. The poem would then begin for example like this:

Ceaselessly, from some dim source,  
Thought-fragments slip into the consciousness  
And then vanish, like dying sparks...

Clarence O. Adams: I like the thought. It is clear and understandable. It follows through nicely, also. Line 7 has an internal rhyme. "Dies" should be replaced. I suggest, "As all things will." This eliminates that internal rhyme and comes to the same conclusion. The last line seems to be a let-down. "Fragments of thought in abnormal dress" would round out the thought of the poem.

Ora Lee Parthesius: Universal theme, and appealing. Suggest the following changes "Never" to "rarely." Smooth line 3 by changing it to "thought-stuff fragments." Period instead of comma after "glimmer and die," thus making "As all things die" more emphatic. There were six commas in six lines. For smoothness omit articles in line 8:

In heart of poet or mind of seer

This too should be most acceptable to any of the good poetry magazines.

Elva: The thought content of the title is excellent, but I would prefer a different way of stating it. I do not care for the three accented beats coming together, nor for the two consecutive long i sounds. Yes, Olive Boyn-

ton, the poem is all done at line 10. It really should stop there. I, too, do not care for "stuff," Eunice Neely. As Madeline Salmon and Clarence Adams suggest, "thought-fragments" or "fragments of thought" is better. Grace Scott's advice concerning the eliminating of chances for rejection is good. Variation of the long i rhymes, Mary Campbell, indeed would make a better and more musical poem. I think, with Ora Lee Parthesius, that "rarely" is better than "never."

But I do not agree that there should be a period after "glimmer and die." A comma can make enough of a pause. A reader pauses at a line end slightly, anyway, and so the comma added is enough. However, we do not need so many commas in that passage. The one at the end of the first line could be omitted without obscuring the meaning. There really need be no punctuation at the end of line 3.

Nor can I agree with Clarence Adams about the internal rhyme. It is an effective variation, in this case, which helps to break up the monotony of the couplets. However, we do not need "As all things die" at all. Madeline Salmon's suggestion to put the poem into unrhymed verse is, as she says, a personal preference. The poem could be done quite well either rhymed or unrhymed, and we must leave that choice to the poet. However, Madeline contributes a valuable idea in her suggestion to condense. Although I do not think her version is musical, she has put the essence of the first six and one-half lines into three. And that is good. The tighter we can write and still not become obscure, the better poets we are. No word in a line of poetry should be wasted. Every one should be tested to see that it is essential.

So, why not, Gertrude Durand, with all the comments in mind do a revision that is as remarkable as the one you did on "The Heron."

Next Time: we have two poems for discussion. Comment on either or both of them. But use a separate sheet for each, please. This is so I can send your letters on to each of the poets. That way the poets get the benefit of all comments including those I don't have room to print. Send in your poems on any subject or in any form. Try to meet the deadline. But send comments anyway. They help a poet greatly.

The next deadline is: Nov. 15th or earlier.

We pay \$1 as token payment for each poem, as soon as we select it for use. We try not to keep you waiting.

Special Note. Poems submitted to the Workshop should not be submitted elsewhere simultaneously. We do not mind their having been rejected. But it is embarrassing to editors if we criticize published poems. Poems used in the Workshop can be submitted to editors, if editors know about the trial use of them.

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Some editors value the fact that a poem represents a perfected or revised ms. Others prefer to use only first rights material. An editor must be allowed to decide by himself. So if you send out a workshop poem, tell an editor about its history.

### Poems for the Next Workshop:

#### EVENING STAR

By Myra Burnham Terrell

Suddenly the sun plummets through  
The horizon's black-branched silhouettes;  
Dusk draws a veil of twilight blue  
Across the sky and gently sets  
A glinting jewel on it to woo  
Earth puppets from their toils and frets.

Moles, burrowing blindly in the ground,  
A world below all that's stellular,  
And mortal moles, who live mud-bound,  
Never know a heart may wear a scar  
Because too little room was found  
To hold the splendor of one star.

"Evening Star" won a second award for its author in the County Federation of Women's Clubs Contest in Pennsylvania. It has been to GOOD HOUSEKEEPING and Washington STAR. It came back without comment. Myra has received about 40 awards in county, state and regional writers' contests. She has sold to the old JUDGE, HOLLAND'S, and Washington STAR.

#### THE FORBIDDEN FREQUENTERS

By Edith Schneck

When the Cisatlantic moon  
jets her glittery rays  
across the sophisticated, stalactite city,  
the diamond-eyed, raven shawled bast  
on hurried, furred feet  
and I (stiletto heels)  
become forbidden frequenters  
searching among armories of metallic streets  
for freedom.

I, hermitage of mind—  
she, surfeiting mistress.

Miss Schneck's comment (the ticket of admission to the Workshop) was on "The Current" and it will be forwarded to Lucy Cooper Summers, who, by the way, was at the Readers' & Writers' Conference at Suffield, and who is grateful for your comments. Also pleased is Marion Walker Fuller, author of "Mandate."

Miss Schneck is a technical writer (one of the British Trade Agency offices). She has only recently entered the field of creative writing. She has placed 6 poems this year so far. "The Forbidden Frequenters" went, under the title "Wayworn Shadows" to SOUVENIR. It came back with the comment, "I like the style very much, couldn't use your poem due to magazine cancellation." Blue River (anthology)

returned it without comment. As "Night Peregrinators" it went to GOLDEN ATOM, and the comment was "not suitable for our publication needs." EXISTARIA returned it, saying, "Title unsuitable for poem." We now have it to study under its present title.

Next Workshop. Now go to it. Send in your comments on the poems, and your own poems to be considered for the Workshop. You help to mature your own work as you help others.

### NEW BOOKS FOR POETS

A SWINGER OF BIRCHES. Sidney Cox. New York University Press. \$3.75. A portrait of Robert Frost. An unusual biography. Physical details are missing. Emphasis is on Frost's character, his philosophy. The writing is so tight that it is aggravating at times. It seems to be a succession of quotes fitted into a context you feel is faithful to the spirit and human quality of the poet. A thoughtful book

MAGIC CASEMENTS. Stanton A. Coblenz. Wings Press. \$2.50. A sound evaluation of the qualities by which to judge poetry in any age. A source of encouragement to the poet who, in the midst of the modern trend toward obscurism, wants to strike a responsive chord in the hearts of more than a small group of readers.

NOW WE ARE ONE. J. Meredith Tatton. Golden Quill Press. \$2.50. An English poet, living on a Texas ranch, "No critic's poet, I am just a boy/piping my songs." He lives up to his own recommendation. Refreshing.

EDEN UNDER GLASS. Joanne de Longchamps. The Book Club for Poetry. \$2.50. An artist, and a widely published poet. Mrs. de Longchamps has many things to say, and says them well. Her verse is intricate, richly decorated, but for the most part strongly articulate. Interested in the person within us all, she is subtle, but rarely obscure, lost in private thoughts. There is something for everyone.

### A FEW LATE MARKET NOTES

THE VOICE OF ST. JUDE, Robert Osterman, 221 West Madison St., Chicago 6, Ill., presents its contributors with a well arranged, rather specific rejection slip stating its editorial requirements. Catholic slant, reports usually within three weeks, pays 1¢ a word on acc. for prose (does not mention payment for verse, but seeks good quality only.)

CHILD LIFE, Adelaide Field, 30 Federal St., Boston 10, Mass., told Bill a few days ago, that she is much concerned about the smallness of the market for children's materials in her field (3-9 years). She has to return many acceptable stories because of shortage of space.

Her special need is for 250 word stories. Must have a complete story and a good punch ending. She pays \$20 for those she buys.



## REWRITE

### SOME FILLER MARKETS

POETRY CONTEST CHART, Stella Weston Tuttle, Box 392, Miami 3, Fla. The Summer issue is a good one. I note that it sidesteps reporting contests not open to all writers. An excellent policy. It also requires contest managers to report winners, or lose their privilege of being included in the Chart. Good!! This issue carries through Jan 1, 1958.

Tom Henry, THIS WEEK, 495 Lexington Ave., NYC 17, pays \$2 for each question and answer printed in news Quiz 'Em column. A clipping must substantiate source. This column seems to be getting shorter. Only four items used in a recent issue.

Family Features Page, Christian Science MONITOR, 1 Norway St., Boston 15, Mass., uses a number of different fillers. It pays \$2 for each item in the Sun Dial column. Part of the page is devoted to contributions from younger writers under 35 years of age. On other pages The MONITOR accepts material prepared by free lance writers, and pays space rates twice a month. Includes news features.

RURAL REPORT, C. S. MONITOR, as above, is paying \$5 for brief and helpful ideas which would prove helpful to those living on farms or in the home in rural areas.

Contributor's Club, YOUNG WORLD, % Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, pays \$1 each for photos, drawings, poems, stories & jokes. Ms. will be returned, if not accepted, if special request is made and 3¢ stamp is enclosed.

YOUNG WORLD and CHILD'S COMPANION, address as above, also accept very short stories, & short serials. Pay is: \$2, and mss. are accepted, but sometimes held a long time with payment on publication. Mr. Wind, however, is a very friendly editor.

Newspaper filler columns pay small sums & offer experience to new writers.

### SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

A retired newspaperman who still does his weekly column, some editing and free lances an occasional article (he's over 80), wrote me the other day, "Sometimes, Bill, I think that if you have material, you can be sure of your readability. But when you haven't, you have got to be readable just the same."

How true that is! When you have a bang-up good story, you have to be on your toes, but it more or less writes itself. But when the material is thin, there is tension & strain and your style becomes "bright" and forced. I've often caught myself in this kind of an empty idea and have realized the best thing is to scrap it and begin over. That is why some writers dodge the "hard" story. It is the real proof of a good writer's quality, I think, to see him "make" readability.

### IMPORTANT TRADE NEWS AND COMMENT

Library Club of America, 28 W. 48th St., NYC 36, is encouraging the setting up of library clubs by school or public libraries to increase the amount of good reading by children. Similar to the Boy Scout merit badges to initiate children into worthwhile activities. Pins and life memberships are awarded.

If there is no such club in your neighborhood, you as a writer can be doing yourself a favor by seeing that one is started. Also take an interest in the library. See that it does not waste its small appropriations for junk, and does buy worthwhile books & magazines.

Incidentally, REWRITE, like many periodicals of better quality, is also published in a microfilm edition, to save space. Royalties from the sales of this edition paid us go to swell the WCS Scholarship Fund, which helps handicapped and shut-in writers.

For further details about microfilm copies of REWRITE address: University Microfilms at 313 No. First St., Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The ARCHER, Wilfred & Elinor Henry Brown, 4050 1/2 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Studio City, Cal. This is a new address for this attractive & friendly little mimeo magazine. It has frequent contests with small cash prizes. And it publishes verse for Poets of the Pacific, a verse membership organization.

Federal Trade Commission. Pocket Books, Inc. has signed a stipulation agreeing to clarify and make clearer its use of new titles on reprinted books.

Bantam Books, Inc., is charged with similar practice in a complaint which includes a charge of inconspicuous announcements about the abridgement of certain books.

Emerson Radio & Phonograph Corp. has signed a consent order prohibiting false advertising concerning "transistor" radios & others claimed to be the "smallest ever made."

AMERICAN LITERARY ASSOCIATION, 3039 N. 53rd St., Milwaukee 10, Wis., announces suspension of AMERICAN POETRY because of increasing costs. The ALA plans to continue its numerous other projects.

FORWARD, Catherine Sidwell, 930 Witherspoon Bldg., Phila. 7, Pa., the Presbyterian Sunday School magazine, has been telling regular contributors it will suspend at the end of the year. It is therefore, not a market.

As I read the letters coming in with renewals to REWRITE, I am impressed with the fact that most of the members of the WCS Family, a cross-section of the world, are doing the best job of writing they can under difficulties. Few of us ever have it easy for long.



## REWRITE

### ARE YOU A TRIFLER?

There was an excellent article in ST. JOSEPH Magazine (July) about those who trifle valuable time away and thereby waste the best years of their life. Rachel Harris Campbell wrote it. The point that trifling, fiddling, fooling, diddling, doodling, and wasting away time are really a subconscious method of putting off doing something worthwhile is of course particularly applicable to writers. We all hate to be alone with our typewriter because we are afraid we will deteriorate & become merely tripewriters.

Here are a list of some of the triflers I noticed in Miss Campbell's rather devastating summary of characters. (the whole article is worth looking up for its incisive observation and keen practicality.)

(1) The gadder, who substitutes activities for accomplishments, and wastes others time as well as his own.

(2) The letter writer, who is writing but substituting quantity for quality and thereby putting off the real job of a writer.

(3) The telephoner. Talking is easier than writing, much more companionable, and less, much less, permanent.

(4) The speck chaser. Usually feminine and verging on the perfectionist, who is always revizing, never really completing projects.

(5) The tool tinkerer. Miss Campbell says that this trifter is always getting ready to do something but never gets to the job. The desk must be cleaned, books put in order or notes amplified.

(6) The TV viewer (and the newspaper, magazine or even book reader, I might add) is a diddler who salves his conscience by saying he is getting ready to write. People who are sufferers from this failing in any form need to watch their production and see if it can justify their trifling.

(7) The amateur sportsman. Usually a spectator, he does not participate. A particular sport does not become either a pleasant recreation or a profitable profession. It's an alibi.

The point that is made in this article is that most of these people are motivated, as you will have perhaps noticed by a sense of insecurity, inertia or indolence, and too easily satisfied ambitions. Many writers in the more amateurish magazines have some ability but have settled for too commonplace a success, that of merely getting their names in print, but not getting the worthwhile check in terms of fame or material rewards.

The best incentives for rushing to a desk are learning to write and wanting to write.

### SAY IT CLEARLY AND CLEANLY

Indulging himself in one the C. S. MONITOR's Home Forum essays recently, Rod Nordell that paper's literary editor, discussed the art of being humorous. The point he made is applicable to much more than the field that entertains people. Mr. Nordell limited himself to the drama, but the moral of the two jokes with which he began his piece graphically illustrates broadly speaking the main extremes of choice open today to writers in the task of reaching American readers.

In literary magazines today it is modestly funny if you quote Pa as saying there is a rumor going around that Truman isn't President any more. But in magazines with wider circulations the moth-eaten joke doesn't get over unless while you are telling it loudly and noisily, you wear a funny hat. The difference being that one set of writers imply, suggest by implication, and in a word write one idea in order to mean another. The other type of writer makes his joke so obvious that their listeners or readers think it is the most excruciatingly waggish thing heard in many a day.

It's all in how you look at things or how you have been brought up. But in between an obvious gag or pun and the more discreet or sophisticated double entendre, as the French like to call it, there are all the shades of meaning, implication and insinuation that a writer can possibly use or a reader may understand. Incidentally the loud noises, the funny hats, and the many times repeated and incessantly underscored build-ups, the burlesque routines are why some of us won't be now caught dead with a tv set in the house—unless we happen to be baseball addicts. In another decade perhaps.

The real meat of Mr. Nordell's essay lies in two quotes he made from a pair of Broadway directors. Abe Burrows (musical comedy) explained that red noses and funny hats are merely the signals to prepare an audience to be ready to laugh. This is of course an expansion of the old Broadway rule of thumb in which the playwright is exhorted to tell an audience something is going to happen, show it happen, then tell the audience it did happen. Mr. Nordell believes we are retreating from a period when some of us trusted audiences a little more, and gave them credit for more brains than some of them exhibit. That would be too bad if it is so. Like the "retreat" from all the fluency and magical use of words and poetic enchantment that characterized the golden age of drama when Shakespeare was at his prime.

Elia Kazan (stage and films) attacked the problem differently. "It was too diffuse," he explained of one of his failures. "People didn't know how they were supposed to feel. I mixed them up and broke the conventions." Many writers do that. Don't tell enough.

## REWRITE

### LATE NEWS FROM THE MARKET PLACE

JACK & JILL, Contest Editor, The Curtis Publishing Co., Phila. 5, Pa., is offering for 1957-58 an award of \$1,000 for the best unpublished serial. Book publication "will be arranged for the author if desired." Competition closes: January 15, 1958. Write for rules.

GOLF WORLD, Pinehurst, N. C., has appointed John Morgan Vander Voort associate editor replacing Jimmy Mann, who resigned.

The New England Theater Conference, Miss Elsi Rowland, membership chairman, 858 Albany St., Boston 19, Mass., was holding this year's annual convention (its 6th) at North-eastern University in Boston on October 5th (Saturday). An all-day program featuring Jo Mielziner.

This organization has done a fine job for both amateur and professional theater workers, including writers, at all levels with a variety of activities, including a bulletin recording its workshops, dramatic presentations and projects, the latter of which are many. Once more, people working together!

Marie Louise Cash, a member of the WCS Family, is doing secretarial work for an author attached to the U. S. Mission in Berlin.

GOSPEL FILMS Inc., Ken Anderson, producer, Box 455, Muskegon, Mich., has begun a series of films called "Stories from Life." These are "based rather closely on actual experience either in the life of a Christian or a person led to Christ through unusual circumstances." CHRISTIAN AUTHOR, which carried a story about this market in its August issue, pointed out stories sold to CHRISTIAN LIFE, for a new adventure series, would receive a further payment if the story was used for a film.

Fully written stories are not essential. A complete outline, from which a shooting ms. could be developed, would be satisfactory. A minimum payment of \$50 for any idea used is promised. Higher payment for stories of exceptional value.

CHILD SECURITY, J. B. Ferguson, 1836 Cimarron St., Los Angeles 19, Cal., offered an enlarged page, bigger type, and new editorial styling in its autumn issue. A fine indication of progress.

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE Committee, Russell Johnson, peace education secretary, Box 247, Cambridge 38, Mass., is conducting actively a campaign to end nuclear bomb testing by all nations. Petition signatures totalling 10,000 signatures have been sent to President Eisenhower. Another 10,000 are on the way, and 2 important pamphlets describing the reasons why the testings cannot any longer be tolerated, are being distributed.

### NEWS AT WCS HOUSE

Bill, Elva and Billy have had a very busy spring and summer. In May as members of the Grange Educational Committee we held a silver tea that raised thirty dollars for educational loans and scholarships by the state Grange. Elva also helped to judge for and award two local Grange scholarships. The guest of honor at the tea, which attracted nearly 60 persons, was a member of the WCS Family, Winona Strachan, whose first novel, "Christopher Jarrett of New Plymouth" had just been published.

In June Billy had his first plane ride as we three flew to Philadelphia for the Philadelphia Regional Writers' Conference. The Board surprised Bill by electing him to the list of its members at large. It was an exciting and stimulating conference. Bill had an opportunity to work with an actress from one of the notable summer theaters just outside Philadelphia on a controversial tv one act play.

In July Bill and Elva drove down to Suffield, Conn., for three days of the Suffield Readers' and Writers' Conference, a conference where defenders of both the traditional and modern poetry clashed in head-on but friendly debate. It was a great experience, for Bill, to meet and hear Odell Shepard, the poet, historical novelist, and teacher state his philosophy and seek to draw out the best in both sides.

This is a vital issue that affects everyone who tries to write seriously today. No one can successfully evade the problem, and avoid thinking where he stands in the great transitions and adjustments that are taking place today. Conferences are the places for good discussion of the issues. For out of a frank discussion comes understanding & progress.

In August Bill was asked to write a guest editorial for FLAME Magazine, which is to be published, we understand, in the Winter issue. Afterwards we three drove to the Maine Writers' Conference, where we renewed friendly acquaintance with many old friends. Both Elva and Bill led workshops, Elva in poetry and Bill in articles and short stories. It's a rewarding experience to discuss writing in the sunshine out in the grove under the 60-foot pines. Afterwards, we loafed for seven days, playing tennis, shuffleboard and sunning on the beach. Bill had a personal conference about a 30,000-word junior novel while Elva worked also on a short story. But otherwise we drove to Kennebunkport with several members of the WCS Family to see the revival of "Rio Rita" by the Arundel Opera Theater Company. Billy was enthralled by a live play with wonderful singing and dancing. A few hours later we dashed down again to hear this superb group of young people sing sacred music in a church. It all added up to fun.

## REWRITE

### YOU CAN'T WIN DEPARTMENT

Recently a writer showed me a letter sent her by an editor who rejected one of her mss. "Funny thing," he said, "I haven't seen one of those stories for about seven years. Then all at once six of them came in this week!" Having read the ms. and the letter, I turned to the evening's edition of the Christian Science MONITOR. There on the Home Forum was another one of the same general subject matter.

This represents one of the breaks in this game that every writer has to condition himself to expect and accept gracefully. Never let it discourage or defeat you. Resolve to get there next time with the better story & first! If you are going to be a professional writer, you or your agent will have that experience many times of receiving the laconic rejection, "Sorry, we have one already in the house."

There is no answer to that answer. You've just got to buckle down and work harder. You must be patient and wait for your break. It will come. Baseball players have streaks of good luck and also bad luck. For weeks they will be "hot" and then suddenly for no good reason their averages slacken off and there are no hits in their bats at all. They try new stances at the plate, new swings, nothing works till one day they hear that well-loved sound of wood against leather. A solid one base hit, or a double.

Not long ago Elva was having a barren period. Somewhat reluctantly she sent a ms. to an improbable market. There were a score of good reasons why the editor would not seriously consider it. Yet in the shortest time he has ever taken to make a decision, there came a letter accepting it. For a long time recently I had been bogged down with my work and was becoming pretty crusty over inability to do anything about the accumulation of subjects waiting to be handled on my desk.

For weeks the drought had been a frustrating factor. I had been lugging pails & pails of water. Suddenly I got mad, sat down & did an article about the drought. The MONITOR got it on a Monday; ran it as a "special" on the following Wednesday. Then magically the log-jam broke and my typewriter began to get hot again. It's the try that counts.

### QUERIES ARE FOR COOL GAMBLERS

A woman writer showed me some mss. with a query attached to each, that she had sent to editors before submitting them. They weren't good queries. Too long: two pages. The story did not build enough from them. There is an art to querying. It is the hors d'oeuvre (the relish) that makes one eagerly anticipate the meal that is to follow. This writer more or less told her story in the query and then did not embellish the substance in

the main body of what she sent to the editor. The result was no lift, no irresistible urge to buy.

The query represents two things to the editor and the author respectively. For the writer it is generally speaking a short cut and a morale-quickener. It tells him whether he has any chance at all. It reassures & calms his fear that he is utterly wasting a period of time. He would like to think that it is an option to buy, and something of an editor's guarantee of an acceptance.

Actually, it is no such thing. Practically 90% of all mss. are bought on speculation. The editor reads them with no advance intention or willingness to buy them. If he gets a thrill, a laugh or sees a functional purpose, he will say yes. If he doesn't, it is no, and that's that. Alfred A. Knopf only a few weeks ago published a novel by a new unknown author. It came into his office without benefit of any fanfare. The first reader began laughing and continued to laugh at increasing pace. Mr. Knopf became interested. He started laughing. The ms. sold itself in 36 hours. (Reviewed in this issue.)

Thus, for the editor the query is a blueprint. It takes care of Who? What? Where? & How? It explains the purpose behind the ms. Realistically and baldly the author says in so many words, "I have a wonderful idea and I do a superb job of making you enjoy a romance that puts Cinderella into the limbo of the forgotten past." (Modest, eh?)

Obviously, a query is not to be undertaken lightly. It is a selling job. The author must know how to merchandise his stuff, and even more important, back it up with solid, sovereign-quality gold. Gold bricks won't do at all. If you promise something hot & then don't deliver, you've let the editor down & he won't forget it. It's better to send no, I mean NO, query than to send a good one, & then not support it with a bang-up try. Better to send a weak query and then surprise, even startle the dutiful second reader.

The sheer physical appearance of your one page can do a lot for you. Make the editor's eye actually visualize your idea and all of the entrancing quality of it. Use an artful outline, blocks of paragraphs or words, underlined capitals, pictures, anything to be striking and appealing. A good queryist can be potentially a million dollar copywriter. And a salesman extraordinary. He is a master of layout, and a spellbinder with words.

Look back to that editorial comment three paragraphs back: Modest, eh? In addition to representing good salesmanship, a query can never be hurt by the light touch, a shading of humor. Not precocious, but deft, authoritative. The fact you are so sure of yourself you can kid your own idea, speaks a vast amount of quiet, reserve competence.



## REWRITE

### NEW BOOKS FOR WRITERS

THE WRITER'S HANDBOOK. Ed. A. S. Burack. The Writer, Inc. \$5.95. Useful articles reprinted from The WRITER, and good lists of writers' markets. Also a list of reputable literary agents. Although no market list which is "perfect", has yet been published, I believe this one ranks very high for accuracy and general usefulness. Recommended.

LITERARY MARKET PLACE. Ed. Anne J. Richter. R. R. Bowker Co. \$4.95. The 1957 edition of the business directory of American book publishing. Not a writer's market list, but it contains so much authoritative information: names, addresses, and lists of reputable agents, editorial services, prize awards, and so on, it is an essential volume. (It must be ordered direct from the publisher: 62 W. 45th St., NYC36.) A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

WHAT HAPPENS IN BOOK PUBLISHING. Ed. Chandler B. Grannis. Columbia University Press \$5.50. A practical survey of publishing by experts from the ms. to finished book. Problems re: subsidiary rights, the law, distribution, a variety of specialized publishing: children's books, religious, medical, etc. are considered also. Anyone contemplating subsidized, i. e. "vanity" publishing should be severely penalized for not reading it before taking any action. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

GRAMMAR FOR JOURNALISTS. E. L. Callihan. The Ronald Press. \$4.50. This is a very practical book for all writers. A grammar written for professional writers, it defines & discusses principles, and illustrates them with specific examples of how to use "difficult" and confusing words or phrases. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

### BOOKS OF INTEREST TO AUTHORS

MAYFLOWER HERITAGE. D. Kenelm Winslow. Funk & Wagnalls Co. \$3.50. An English book written in the scholarly and well documented yet very readable manner by a man descended from Mayflower stock. Good background material.

I'D DO IT AGAIN. James Michael Curley. Prentice-Hall. \$4.95. Boston's inimitable mayor missed the boat with this one. Cocky, self-amused at the sardonic "exposures" by which he has flicked friends and enemies alike, he has put his worst side forward. The opportunity to let a picture of the good things retrieve his reputation has been missed.

BEST WISHES, BROWNIE WISE. Foreword, Rev. Norman Vincent Peale. Podium Publishing Co. \$3.95. A very successful businesswoman here offers her inspirational thoughts on how to make your wishes come true. The ideas have validity and the writing as put together by Maurice Marshall, has conviction.

Read to grow inside, and write better.

ALIAS O. HENRY. Gerald Langford. The Macmillan Co. \$5.00. The first searching and well documented biography of one of America's original modern short story writers. A sympathetic, realistic attempt to evaluate William Sidney Porter as a man and craftsman. The author is a professor at the Univ. of Texas.

Alexander Hamilton in the American Tradition. Louis M. Hacker. McGraw-Hill Book Co. \$4.75. An interesting appraisal of the man who was the most practical conservative and "modern mind" among the Founding Fathers of America.

COME WITH ME TO MACEDONIA. Leonard Drohan.. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.95. This novel by a new writer, has been tagged by the publisher as the funniest he has read in a long time. (It was accepted in 36 hours.) Actually it is a novel in the "Grand Hotel" style. Reportage, interpretation, and light satire of life behind the Civil Service iron curtain in Washington, D. C. is quite entertaining & mildly penetrating. Less fiction than "true experience" in the round, one may believe.

GHOST SHIP OF THE CONFEDERACY. Edward Boykin. Funk & Wagnalls. \$4.95. The story of a great sea-raider, the Alabama, and her commander, Capt. Raphael Semmes. Written by an ex-advertising man and "radio professor of American History" as well as a Southern author of six books and two plays, it is a racy but fair estimate of the exploits of a courageous American North and South can treasure proudly.

MAINE PLACE NAMES. Ava Harriet Chadbourne.. The Bond Wheelwright Co. \$1.00 each. These eight county brochures recounting the peopling of Maine towns do not take the place of a detailed history book, but they are valuable as background and a short-cut to writers about Maine. Ava Chadbourne has performed a labor of love many should be very grateful to her for.

### TWO PROFESSIONAL TOOLS

The R. R. Bowker Co. has just complemented its famous BOOKS IN PRINT with a twin no writer can long do without. This is SUBJECT GUIDE TO BOOKS IN PRINT, 1957. Through the facilities of the library of Franklin & Marshall College and a task force administered by Librarian H. B. Anstaett, writers now may find in a single book an index listing of 80,000 available titles from 900 U. S. publishers, or 30,000 subject heads with 20,000, in all, cross references. Beside each main head there are reminders of related fields. What a research tool! All public libraries & book stores will probably stock it for their own use. It costs after publication, \$17.50.

Doubleday & Co. have devised a dictionary (the THORNDIKE-BARNHART ADVANCED JUNIOR) to help all of us poor spellers to spell. It's got a chart that shows the different ways to spell a sound. So now you can find words!

## REWRITE

### BE SURE YOU HOLD THE RIGHTS

A question that is often asked is what to do about a writer's chance to use the letters of some famous personality. As a practical example, a writer who is an experienced newspaper woman, was offered an opportunity to use the letters and papers of a leader in his special field in the entertainment world. The man is now dead, but his widow, a shrewd businesswoman, sold some of his property and apparently threw in his correspondence and some papers relating to the buyer.

The question is divided in two ways. Has the writer, a third party, the right to use this material? Does she need to give any of her income from the written material she may sell to either of the owners of the papers, which she has been allowed to research? The literary and property rights are involved & complicated, even though the writer may receive assurance she can go ahead.

I told this writer she should assume nothing and be sure to have all permissions and understandings down on paper. Signed by the right party. And it would be wise to have a lawyer's opinion and counsel.

It takes an experienced writer with a full knowledge of the famous person's background to tell how valuable the material really is. It may be priceless, or worthless. There is the possibility of a local news story and a magazine story, but no book. Or there easily might be a book. A check of the material already available will answer this question in part. The writer's sense for a new or uncovered angle will help, too.

But does the new owner of the material aspire to some easy literary fame or cash? Is he or she willing to give the writer a free hand, or does he want to benefit, if there's any financial rewards? I told the writer on no account should she risk her money in advance. Even paying a percentage of the profits is chancey. Each case is a separate entity in itself. How much does each party do to bring in the money? Editors do not ordinarily like to purchase literary property in which there is any question as to ownership or where the joint authors are not an efficient and smoothly working team.

Finally, the matter of letters is hazardous. Not many people realize that as a matter of law letters are usually the property of the person who wrote them, not the recipient. You may be committing a trespass or an invasion of privacy if you publish a letter or a photograph without a signed release by the person concerned. If the person isn't a public character or in the news, a politician, statesman, or actor, athlete, etc., the law of privacy can be and sometimes is rigidly enforced. In the above case, the letters may still belong to the widow, or possibly be copyrighted in a book. An author is

held accountable for his use of material as well as his knowledge of its journalistic worth. I have known writers who have got in serious trouble by publishing material that was controlled by private ownership, or under copyright protection. I have also known writers who infuriated large corporations & even the government agencies by upsetting a delicate operation of foreign policy and negotiation.

I myself broke a story once involving the undercover handling of the affairs of a big educational institution. After my scoop appeared the institution attempted to prevent publication of the inevitable follow-up story. This was an unwarranted intrusion on the public's right to the news, although the institution considered it a private matter and not the public's business. Moreover, this institution was powerful enough to have got me dismissed, if my editor with the full support of the publisher, had not defended my right as a reporter to the full freedom of the press. Another writer not so fortunate, managed to draw down upon her the ire of a large corporation, which managed to suppress a book.

There are thus times when principle & moral or ethical rights clash with property or fancied personal rights. Then the author is forced either to defend his right to write, or see a story go down the drain. Sometimes one can argue and persuade people or institutions that a good story will prove better human and public relations than suppression of legitimate information. Sometimes such a plan is impossible. At other times there is the third alternative of contesting the issue legally. That requires money and a courageous editor and publisher. Ironically, the last method is being practiced by a few publishers, who have found that they can build a large enough circulation to make possible a profit even when sued repeatedly for libel. This is not an ethical practice that anyone in his right mind can condone.

The point in a nutshell in this matter is that a writer must (1) know where the property rights lie when he is handling a story where ownership of materials may be involved. And (2) he must decide for himself what the ethical and moral values attached to it are. I saw an old story revived the other day that damages a man's present reputation. He had been more or less a part of the unsavory story, largely through family connections & youthful inexperience. But he had long since paid his debt to society and had lived an exemplary life. Public interest did not in any way require a resurrection of the old sensation. But an author and an editor saw a potential profit in it.

This was a case where public interest and personal injury clashed. Even if under such conditions the materials are in the public domain, the matter of good taste should truly prevail. Better leave the ashes unstirred.

## REWRITE

### HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Helen Langworthy  
Articles: CONQUEST, Michigan FARMER, C.  
S. MONITOR, NATIONAL HUMANE REVIEW, and  
Grand Rapids PRESS.

Rebecca Phillips  
Article: C. S. MONITOR.

Lucy Cooper Summers  
Poems: The VILLAGER (Bronxville), Hart-  
ford COURANT.

Ruth J. Adams  
Children's stories: C. S. MONITOR.

Gertrude Durand  
Poems: The FAWN-LIGHT and BLUE MOON.

Elinor B. Steiner  
Article: CERAMICS.

Linnea Staples  
Article: N. H. PROFILES (September).

Dorothy Holman  
Article: AM. AGRICULTURIST.

Kathryn M. Wilson  
Articles: WORDS OF CHEER. Self-Analysis  
Quiz: Ziff-Davis Publishing Co.

Emily May Young  
Poems: CONQUEST, UPWARD, JUNIOR LIFE, &  
REFLECTIONS, MOTHER'S Magazine, The IN-  
STRUCTOR.

Haviland F. Reves  
Article: GOOD BUSINESS.

Note: Tell us about your sales and placements. We like to know about them. It helps us to offer many of our writer-readers good market suggestions and guidance as we write back and forth. And editors read this news. Agents comment on items of interest to them from time to time.

Most important, your news of markets aids us in rounding out our own surveys of what's happening in editorial offices. Remember, no one can possibly know everything that there is to learn about market conditions, trends, specific editorial changes. REWRITE brings every piece of late news it can. And we don't depend exclusively on editorial hand-outs & releases. In the true reportorial tradition we cross-check wherever we can. (That's what every writer has to do, and should do.) Editors and agents are frequently surprised by our detailed knowledge of events they didn't know were in the open. Your tips help us.

Sample Copies. Because REWRITE as a matter of principle accepts no advertising, it has a standing Sample Copy Offer: 2 issues, 25¢. Back copies: 5 late issues: \$1. p.p.

REWRITE'S unbiased reporting saves you money.

### DO YOU SUCK A LEMON?

A thought-provoking letter in the Christian Science MONITOR reported a radio storyteller as saying that stories with morals attached to them should not be used too often because they bore the children. The author of the letter then questions the advisability of our having taken religion out of the public schools. And the scarcity of religious education in the home and the small percentage of children in relation to the total number, who receive it in church schools. "Where are they going to get their religious training?" she asks. A good question.

In too many of the Sunday School publications for children the stories and articles for children are sickly sentimental and rub in the moral with a heavy thumb. There are better ways of doing it. And don't forget a rule of thumb in publishing is that inspirational material is one of the all around & steadiest best sellers there is. Look at the popularity of Norman Vincent Peale's multi-thousands of published words a year. Alfred A. Knopf says the one millionth copy of Kahlil Gibran's "The Prophet" will be sold to some reader at about this time. These are references to adult reading. But remember a child is basically an idealist. Children to an even greater sense than adults like to see the good triumph and their heroes win.

There are three principles involved. The first is not to make a moral too obvious. Do not pin it on to a story arbitrarily at the end of a story. Nor over-play it by exaggerating it in relation to the story. Naturalness is a rare pearl beyond price. Elva has an expression for use when a story seems too sweet. "Pleese pass the lemons." Editors and writers should take it to heart and watch to see if they can pass the lemon test.

The second principle is to show the moral instead of telling it. Why are you telling a story if not to entertain a reader and by your wisdom widen his experience? This really is an application to fiction of the non-fiction writer's principle of continually & deftly alternating from sharp topic sentences to demonstrative anecdotes and vice versa. The prose writer more and more tries to "fictionize" his articles. So the fictional author should try to fictionize his morals.

The third principle is that a moral, like the twist in the perfect short story, should be a bonus. In both cases this bonus should grow out of the characters and action. That means it must be an integral part of the emotionalized system of cause-and-effect. It must be built into the chain of motivations and two-way emotional & human relations inherent in the story.

Respect your role of storyteller. Remember that Odell Shepard said at the Suffield Conference that the arts are the one language



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of the mind and heart that is universal and understood by all people. They reach out to a wider audience even than religion. So you should consider the power of your appeal. It is possible for the good story-teller to be a more lasting teacher of the human race in all its variety than even the priest or minister and the schoolmaster himself. Therefore use your power wisely and with humility. "Be ye wise in all things."

### NEWS OF EDITORS AND THINGS

A friendly note from Edwin P. Geauque, editor and publisher of Wake-Brook House, reporting they are deep in production of three new books for fall release. He also told of speaking before a "small but enlightened new group of writers" who gathered on the Isles of Shoals (Star Island), 11 miles off Portsmouth, N. H., this summer. He told them that he is "opposed to all 'vanity' publishing & wants no part of slender volumes of verse—those having nothing more to recommend them than that the authors are well enough heeled to pay to bring them out." He added wryly that usually writers' conferences do not take to the kind heresy he preaches.

Mr. Geauque does publish verse, however, & it has been our experience that the editors who view life realistically and speak with a tangy tongue dipped in heresy or gall, sometimes are the ones we remember longest. His comment is at the least revealing, a character-trait in editors we have often made good use of in our time.

Shirley Barker told us at the Readers' and Writers' Conference in Suffield, Conn., she is no longer an active editor of N. H. PROFILES. She is only doing a monthly historical article for them. She's working on a novel.

Writers' Club in New York City. A letter signed by Alfred K. Allan, pres., & Dorothy Glazer, sec. (her address: 1685 Ocean Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. Phone: ES-7 3750), tells of a "congenial group of people of all ages interested in writing as a hobby or a profession. They meet in a member's home bi-weekly (every other Sunday). They write practically everything from fillers to novels. No admission requirements except that a writer must be actively trying to market his mss.

The Federal Trade Commission, Washington, 25, D. C., notes an increase of 32% in letters of complaint (2,500 from people thinking they have been cheated). Chairman John A. Gwynne says 80% of the Commission's cease and desist orders result from complaints, & the rest from Congress, Better Business Bureaus, etc. The source of complaints is never revealed. The help of the public is very welcome. The Commission's authority covers only interstate commerce. Full identifying, i.e., names and addresses, data is needed & description of the nature of the fraud. The Commission cannot settle private quarrels.

### NEWS OF THE WCS FAMILY

Alice Morse, Canoga Park reporter for The Valley News, won a third prize statuette in the community newspaper feature division in annual contest sponsored by Theta Sigma Phi national honorary organization for women in journalism, and the Los Angeles Newspaper Publishers' Association.

Rebecca Phillips' nice husband has died.

Lucy Cooper Summers took the trouble to report on what a fine job Grace Loomis is doing as editor of the Hartford COURANT's poetry column.

Helen Fletcher Collins, formerly an editor, recently won a first prize in a contest in The ARCHER, edited and published by Elinor Brown and her husband, Wilfred, members of the WCS Family. Belle S. Mooney also received credit for a quatrain in the same poetry and prose magazine.

Lillian Stickney has had a number of poems in the RURAL NEW YORKER.

Quentin R. Howard, a newspaperman himself, contributes frequently to the C. S. MONITOR (Family Features page).

Let us hear your news!

### YOU CAN HELP YOURSELF

I read an interesting article recently in the union newspaper of IAM (International Association of Machinists) about the way that letter writers help the Federal Trade Commission to track down gyp firms. Here's the meat of it:

The FTC carefully files every single letter. If enough arrive concerning a specific firm, all of them are assigned to an attorney for investigation.

WHAT FTC CAN'T do—contrary to widespread belief—is to settle an individual's quarrel with a company, help him get his money back on a bad purchase, or force a company to make good on a guarantee.

"The Commission has no such power to arbitrate personal claims," says Sherman R. Hill, the FTC's Chief Projects Attorney. "All we can do is investigate the matter, and if action is warranted by the public interest, we stop future misrepresentation."

Neither does the Commission put some seal of approval on business firms.

This shows that other publications besides REWRITE are becoming aroused by dangerous declines in the standards of advertising. When you believe you have a just complaint against one of the services seeking writers' trade, consult the FTC. Its activity bulletins are free to all citizens. Ask for them.

### Here's What to Write In Complaints to FTC

The FTC suggests this guide for letters of complaint:

- Give exact name of company and product.
- Include copy of misleading newspaper or letter advertising.
- Put down precise wording of radio or TV advertising.
- Tell in detail how salesman misrepresented product.
- Never send personal documents or property.

Address letter to: Bureau of Investigation, Federal Trade Commission, Washington 25, D. C.

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### LET US DE-EMPHASIZE THE NEGATIVE

American Friends Service Committee, New England Regional Office, Box 247, Cambridge 38, Mass., is taking a significant and courageous step. It is circulating petitions to President Eisenhower urging a ban on further testing of nuclear weapons.

This is a must if the entire world, which we inhabit, is to remain a healthy place for us and our children to live in. An uneasy peace is not enough. Total and limited wars must not be any longer tolerated, but also we will have to be willing to take positive actions leading to cessation of contamination of the air we breathe by even the experimental explosion of nuclear ammunition. An example in this respect set by America should have great weight. No other nation would be willing to be placed in the position of insisting on its right to wipe out the entire human race. World opinion is a strong force.

If you wish to sign one of these petition sheets, write to Russell Johnson, peace education secretary, at the above address. Remember that your ability to write is worthless in a world made barren by the war-makers. Let us try love and human kindness for a change.

"THROUGH A QUAKER ARCHWAY". Horace Mather Lippincott is projecting the publication of an anthology of some great Quaker ideas. If you would like to make its publication definitely possible and secure, write to him at this address: East Lane, Phila. 18, Pa.

Christopher Morley, James Michener, Herbert Hoover, Nora Wain, Jessamyn West, and Richard Nixon are a few of the contributors.

### ...DOES YOUR JOB PUSH YOU AROUND?

The editor of a little magazine wrote me a few days ago. The letter was so hurried and poorly written it was practically illiterate in its expression of the few ideas conveyed. It did not serve its intended purpose. The impression it gave to me, a comparative unknown friend, was very bad. If I had judged the writer only by his letter, I would have thought him not at all able in his field. It made me feel I counted very little in his estimation.

There is much truth in the old truism: make haste slowly. It has an especial value when writers are concerned. You cannot write well when you try to whip out a job in a hurry. A sloppy job always betrays itself and doesn't reflect credit on you. It does not sell you to your reader.

There is also the important fact that the good writer requires leisure and the necessary quiet to meditate. A "story" must germinate like a seed. Sometimes your subconscious works quickly. But more often color and feeling pile up only slowly. Do a good job!

### THINGS WORTH KNOWING

"Travel Literature Free for the Asking—and Helpful." Under this bold face head, the travel editor of the C. S. MONITOR, Leavitt F. Morris, recently wrote about the reading quality and value of the "tons" of material that daily crosses his desk. A writer often can pick up useful facts from it as well as background color. Ideas for articles may be suggested, too. And some writers earn extra money writing some of these booklets or the features articles used in metropolitan news paper or even magazine travel pages.

The June issue of The COMPASS, bulletin of Christian Authors' Guild, had a well reasoned lead article by Dorothea Cornwell urging writers for secular magazines to re-consider the religious field, which she says, faces a shortage of really good writers. And curiously, she showed that a POST article that failed to stress the religious interest concerning the "Save-a-Life League" gave another writer a chance to cover the same subject for a religious magazine! Some writers have been known to graduate from the religious to the commercial magazines.

An International Airmail Post Card? Milt Forrest, a public relations consultant, who has conducted a one-man campaign for such a desirable communications tool, is hopeful. A suggestion for one is being made by the U.S. Post Office Department for the agenda of the Ottawa meeting of the Universal Postal Union when it meets on August 14th. Earlier, a United Nations airmail postcard was issued, by the UN, on May 27th for use from its NYC headquarters. Such a card would facilitate, I think, correspondence with writer markets overseas, and so would benefit writers from every part of the world.

James Neill Northe, editor of SEVEN, and a friend of poets, conducted the Poetry Workshop in the annual short course on Professional Writing at the University of Oklahoma in June.

Who Controls the Media? Dean Gordon A. Sabine of Michigan State University's College of Communication Arts told the NEA convention recently that the "most important thing for a student of communications to understand is that: people possess the power they need to shape and control the media, but they haven't exercised that power effectively for social good."

That means that readers possess the power to change for the better the quality of the stuff used by every type of media merely by giving voice to their approval or disapproval. Those in charge are quick to meet tangible evidence of the likes and dislikes the audiences exhibit clearly. And writers also can influence media merely by expressing their likes and dislikes, too. And by seeking to elevate their product's quality, and making the worthwhile more entertaining.

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### HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF THIS?

In a recent syndicated column Sylvia Porter, the commentator on economics, gave her entire column up to a discussion of the 12-billion dollar packaging industry. A writer could learn much from the points she made. A marketing conference she attended heard one expert say: it is now "widely accepted that it's the package, and not the product, that does the selling job at the point-of-purchase. (The store counter.)"

Note well that this emphasis on purchase, the actual buying, says nothing about a buyer's satisfaction with the product. A selling package will not hold up indefinitely a worthless product. Your product must be excellent if the salable quality of the package is to be backed up. All that this statement proves is that an eye-catching, appealing package is the first step to a sale.

How many writers realize this? How many of them take specific steps to make their packages eye-watering to the editor or the consumer, the reader? Yet if they don't, there goes a sale.

Miss Porter made the point that a package should in the words of another expert "give the consumer permission to go ahead and eat." This is another way of expressing the ancient truism about putting hooks in the opening of your story or article, that will catch, then make your reader want to continue to read & absorb it. But this statement goes farther. It suggests the necessity of dressing up the package, making it so alluring it is irresistible. As a writer, do you do that always?

These experts have discovered another important thing. Men are more attracted to the form of a package, women to its color. So a psychologist says: "We are all cursed with a sort of egotism that convinces us we have an infallible insight into our fellow human beings. We assume arbitrarily that our taste is also that of the consumer." Miss Porter makes the wrap-up comment that those trying to sell, must study their customers. Must use definite tested appeals. That's very excellent advice for writers. They need to study, even pick the minds and emotions of the editors and special readers they seek to sell their product to. That's where the science, the grim over-coming of rugged competition, which is the very heart of writing to sell, enters in. You are living in a tough age. It is necessary to leave no stone unturned because if you do, you may miss a sale.

Finally, the packaging experts have worked out a technique of using the unusual, so that the buyer always remembers, nay, cannot forget a certain type and styled package as distinguished from all others. They say that "Just as sentences which end by trailing off in a line of...can be more meaningful sometimes than the completed thought, so the cut-

off plate on this package makes it more memorable." Research applied to this package can establish the value of devices like this.

Looks as if industry is spending millions to steal a writer's stuff. But do you realize how necessary it is for you, just to capture the editor's attention and interest, to use the same kind of devices? If your "job" is sloppy and obviously amateurish, will it have a chance against that of a professional who is desperately serious about pushing you aside and getting the sale you want?

Recently I was meeting with a gathering of writers intent on the literary quality, and the aesthetic values of their writing. They made me feel very "commercial" because when asked to say a few words I talked on the job of selling. (That was the subject handed to me.) Yet whether you write for the big magazines or the Little ones, you have to do jobs of selling, if you do not want to be outside looking in.

There is nothing sinful about doing a good job of presenting and merchandising your ideas so that they will reach the greatest & most suitable, number of readers possible.. An artist in any medium must communicate. If he only creates and does not reach an audience he has only done half of his assignment. The sin comes when he over-emphasizes selling and is only interested in the returns to him rather than what his work does for those to whom it is directed. Too many writers in my experience do not think beyond their own small circle. They are not selfish or greedy. Merely oblivious of the needs of the reader and their own responsibility to him.

Writing will always remain an art. But it has many utilitarian aspects. And if selling is necessary and important to you, you will be wise if you study the science of accomplishing it in the same way that these package industry tycoons do. Your competition is just as tough, if not tougher, than that they face.

If you do not believe this, here are comments I received recently from two writers. One is what we would call a writer going up the ladder. She says: "Editors are becoming slower and slower! Markets that used to send a check in two weeks, have slowed to four--and others, that reported religiously as of a certain date each month with an acceptance, or reject, have now slowed so you just don't know."

The other author, who has spent years being accepted by almost all of the big slick magazines, confided to me: "Bill, I've had a bad year." She mentioned several short stories and a long one. I recall the year I was assisting the director at Bread Loaf Conference when Bernard DeVoto has eight stories rejected by the POST & Collier's. Everyone has competition. It takes vision to sell!



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### REPORT FROM THE MARKET PLACE

The LINK, Lawrence P. Fitzgerald, 122 Maryland Ave., N. E., Washington 2, D. C., sent a letter and news release covering new editorial requirements to its contributors and to Larry's writers for TEENS. (Dated July 24, 1957.) He is eager to make this one of the finest Christian journals in America. He urged the "best writers to send him their best" & put him first on the list.

Fiction: 2,000 - 2,500 words, and he lists seven rules:

- (1) Story — Plot, struggle, conflict.
- (2) Must stir the emotions. Facts and feelings.
- (3) Must begin well. Setting, time, the MC, in action, and bring in the problem.
- (4) Movement and wholeness. Scenes moving to a climax.
- (5) Characters must be convincing. Real people, and only one MC.
- (6) Must be appropriate to age group. Adults 17-30 years, married and unmarried. Copies are read in veterans hospitals.
- (7) Must have a message. Must say something.

Articles: 1,000 - 1,500 words. For young men and women in military service.

Fillers, photographs, jokes (10-20 per issue). Also cartoons.

Poetry: limited number. One, two or three stanzas.

Payment: Prose, 1 and 1/2¢ per word. Jokes, 50¢. Cartoons, \$5. Poetry, \$1 per stanza, and pictures, \$3. \$7.50 for covers. Material is read every 2 weeks. Pay on acc. (Larry is a fine chap.)

Interview with an agent. One no writer in the big time should miss is Jesse Ash Arndt's with Annie Laurie Williams, who handles many of the really big Hollywood and Broadway super deals (books into films, plays and musicals). Jessie Arndt is woman's editor of C. S. MONITOR (July 25th issue.) It's important background material for any writer.

National Writers' Club. The mid-year mimeo Bulletin for Professional Members of this membership organization was an unusually interesting and solid job.

REWRITE Prize Subscriptions. This year to the VA Center, Los Angeles, and VA Hospital at Keesoughton, Va.

Alice Hackett, 390 West End Ave., NYC 24, is serving as the NYC contact for a new international literary agency: Intercontinent Literary Service, Eugenio Cassin, 22 Borgo Jacopo, Florence, Italy. At present she has as her major interest working with publishers. Bill has known her for years. Very fine person and editor over a long period at PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY. Some of the agents handling foreign rights are dubious & distant.

The Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust, 49 E. 33rd St., NYC 16, awards its money for living expenses. Fellowships up to \$2,500, are available to help talented writers complete book projects. Although Saxton was a Harper & Brothers editor, recipients are free to offer their finished mss. to any publisher. In no case are the awards to enable the recipient to take courses of instruction.

The Boston HERALD-TRAVELER, which also is full owner of radio-television station WHDH, a sore point so far as other communications media in Boston are concerned, is moving away from its downtown shopping area building — to a new \$5 million dollar plant in a new redevelopment park in Boston's old South End. This is in line with a pattern being followed by numerous large metropolitan newspapers in other parts of the United States. Temporarily, it may limit interest in free lance writers while working capital is used to get the transfer financed.

Some opposition is being voiced by exponents of freedom of the press to this multiple ownership of several media by one corporation. It has resulted in many cities and metropolitan areas having only one news outlet and one market for free lance writing — not a healthy situation.

Another debatable situation was commented upon during the heated fight over Gov. Furolo's (Dem.) unhappy attempt to trade with the Republicans to effect both his sales tax and their lowering of the income tax. Politicians of both parties were more interested in new jobs and making the tax bite more palatable than in attacking the mounting problem of ballooning debt financed by borrowed money (an increasing issue all over the nation.) But the Christian Science MONITOR expressed serious alarm at other Boston newspapers being high pressured by their advertisers to lobby in the State House corridors in behalf of this unholy alliance. Public indignation resulted in collapse of the whole maneuver for this year at least, although a supplementary budget last straw effort is in the making. Writers should not fool anyone, least of all themselves, that money siphoned off into high taxes is not drained out of their pockets. That is the single most evident reason why so many of your markets are folding or reducing purchases from the free lance writer.

BEST ARTICLES & STORIES. Jerome Ellison, 1750 Devon Lane, Bloomington, Indiana, a new reprint magazine is starting in October. It plans to draw its material from quality and specialized little magazines, selected from "nominations made by contributing magazines' editors." That would seem to limit its scope somewhat. And the fact that it will not carry any advertising, implies that values for authors will be more in prestige than money. The idea is good, however. Ellison is a former READER'S DIGEST assoc. editor.

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### THE WESTERN WRITERS OF AMERICA

The post-convention issue (August) of The ROUNDUP, the Western Writers of America magazine, is full of interesting points for all writers. First, the WWA is continuing an aggressive policy of publicizing and merchandizing the Western story, which Hoffman Birney, who reviews them in the N.Y. TIMES says is far and away the purveyor of America's No. One culture-hero (the man in the high-heeled boots and trailing spurs). Other special types of American writing might well follow this excellent example.

Item: two WWA anthologies are to be issued by Dodd, Mead & Co. "Hoof Trails and Wagon Tracks" is a regular annual, but this year, a juvenile anthology, "The Wild Horse Round-up," will be added. Item two: the tv show—it has not yet been sold to a sponsor—is to be guaranteed original scripts from some 36 members of the WWA, with ultimately all the membership backing the venture.

Second, S. Omar Barker, who is also a poet and humorist, suggests that every member seek to be a book reviewer and publicity activator (he says he learned that last word, a two-dollar one, from the "govinmint!") on the local scene for the books and news concerning all the other members. He listed the numerous reviews and tips to the papers, tv, radio, etc., that he himself has accomplished recently. Another good idea that writers in other lines could follow.

Third, Noel M. Loomis contributed a piece summarizing some of the gripes writers have against publishers. His list:

- (1) Editors ought automatically to send the writer a tearsheet or checking copy of each story they print.
- (2) Demanding this right would help writers to keep their copyright file in order. The renewal of a copyright at the end of twenty-eight years for another twenty-eight, has to be applied for by the author, who has to supply the exact name of the magazine, date of issue, and publisher.
- (3) Book publishers should notify the author in advance the date of publication & also send him a copy of the jacket. This will help him keep his records, and he can often obtain additional publicity.
- (4) The author should not be among the last to receive copies of the book.
- (5) The author should be notified with full details, about reprints and other side-line sales. Again this helps on copyright. (Once Bill notified an author about a reprint sale involving a check. A considerable length of time had elapsed, yet this was the first the author knew of the sale, or the right of the publisher to make such a sale without consult-

ing the writer first. Or letting him have a say in the matter.)

Somewhat acidly, but deservedly so, Loomis adds that he has not "learned of any publisher who has observed all of these courtesies in a systematic manner, and I know of no other publishers who observe more than any one of them."

Finally, Lin Searles supports a suggestion offered by Loomis that the WWA look into the possibility of a Research Library. He tells about the old "Ask ADVENTURE" column run by the magazine of that name. A group of known experts, with their addresses, were listed. The National Writers' Club, 1819 Gilpin St., Denver 18, Colo., of course practices a similar plan among its members. Searles thinks the WWA membership, many of whom specialize, and are experts on particular phases of the old West, could supply the nucleus of such a research library.

Many of the ideas put forward by this issue of The ROUNDUP, as well as the magazine itself, require a lot of time and energy on the part of the members. But the WWA proves it has the dedicated members willing to give this creative help to each other and a common profession.

Bill believes firmly that people assisting each other in this way, is always the best & most satisfactory answer to many problems. A great many aspects of professional writing & selling can be done better by people working together than separately. Bill believes the growing number of co-operatives are a lasting testimony to this fact.

Many writers' groups can and could develop practical ideas along those suggested on this page. Probably further ideas would appear if any co-operative enterprise commenced. Bill has often suggested to clubs which meet periodically, that if each member regularly would bring to meetings a 3 x 5 card or envelop containing information regarding markets he has gathered since the last meeting, the club or group at the end of a year would have a better alphabeticized file and more information than most writers' monthly magazines supply it in the same period. The thing is to get members willing to work actively and regularly on such a project. The Western Writers of America are to be commended for having the initiative, energy, & loyalty to work together in this enlightened & progressive manner.

### A NEW RELIGIOUS BOOK AWARD

The Bethany Press, Box 179, M. P. O., St. Louis 3, Mo., has announced two new awards, \$2,500 plus a \$500 advance in the general area of Christian religion, and the same total in the specific area of the Disciples of Christ Christian Churches. Write for a brochure with information. To be given in 1958.

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### TO WRITE WELL, LEARN THE FUNDAMENTALS

There is one very simple step that all ambitious writers can take to put themselves a step ahead of their competitors. Learn the fundamentals of their professional craft! A writer does not have to be running near the bottom because he does not understand any of the first principles of telling a story. In both fiction and non-fiction, indeed in any of the forms of writing, and all the arts & means of communication, the ability to tell a story significantly and excitingly is the first step. If you can do that, you will at least catch and hold an audience's interest momentarily. Then it is merely a question of refining your technical skill.

The first great law in telling a story is to build a line of interest. This is only a different way of saying that you must build some kind of effective organization into the material you assemble for the reader. There must be a beginning, a middle, and an end. A reader dislikes to stand still. He wants to be told Who the story is about; What it's about; Where it is happening, and How & Why. If you answer these questions methodically, and build to an exciting climax, you almost inevitably will have a primitive line of interest imbedded in your story. The difference between an experienced writer and amateur facsimiles lies in the ability to manage one's housekeeping in an offhand manner pleasing to the reader. A dancer reaches an outer state of perfection when he no longer looks at his feet. So the writer becomes an author when he sloughs off obviousness. No longer has to be abysmally literal.

Therefore the second great law of telling a story is to achieve narrative drive. This means telling your story in such a way that it sweeps the reader off his feet. He can't let the story stop or put his reading down. He must continue reading to the end. You do this by giving your story a sense of importance, and telling it excitingly. Suspense and drama are involved here. But basically, all there is to it is keeping steam up at a high pitch, so that the train moves steadily forward over your single track line of ideas, and increasingly warms the reader's emotional feelings so that his pulse races at a higher beat. Give the story a sense of urgency.

Now these are abstract words I am throwing at you. You have to learn to translate them into specific practice. This is difficult, I admit. But no one can give you imagination, or tell you how to fall in love. They can only explain the theory and help you at the right time to open your eyes and see. There is one practical method, however, of aiding you. Read with one eye cocked to see how the other fellow does it. If you are reading an exciting story, or one that gives you an idea it is significant and important, try to discover why it does. What imaginative pull

does the author put into it? What technique does he employ? Study his choice and use of words. Analyze creatively the author's every secret. Not just critically, but creatively so that you enjoy the story more because you appreciate the way it is put together to be entertaining to the reader. In an imaginative way learn to make effective use of what you have learned from this and other satisfying stories you have read.

The third great law of story-telling is a single viewpoint. In the beginning this naturally means that you stick to one angle in the story. Later, when you have learned successfully to keep a story focussed, you can branch out and tell a story from a variety of viewpoints. The multiple viewpoint story. A lot of writers will disregard this advice & then wonder why their stories come regularly back to them. These writers are in a hurry for success and big checks. They will not stop to see that the reason for this law, as those behind all the fundamentals are based soundly on reader psychology. You tell a story from a single viewpoint because that's a part of the story-teller's job to organize a story not only so it will hit the reader in the most effective manner and with the greatest possible impact, but also so the reader cannot possibly miss the point of it.

The fourth great law in telling a story is to allow the reader to participate, yet retain his own identity apart from the story. This makes possible the great fascination of story-telling. Not only can the reader feel that the story is his own, that it is happening to him right here and now in the living present, but also, being a person apart from it, he can view the story as a spectator, he achieves a perspective he cannot achieve in real life. That is like looking at a battle from the air, watching men getting killed, or a thief being run down and taken by the police. Anyone who has done either of those things, or watched another human being die in the electric chair, run screaming out of a building with his clothes on fire, can tell you why drama in real life, or in real facsimile on the printed page, the stage or on a screen, has an endless and enchanting appeal.

When a writer fails to write salable copy it is largely, I think, because blind, he has not grasped the immensity of his task, nor the privilege of his opportunity: to create life and by his imitation of it, to clarify or interpret its meaning. All the great writers it has been my privilege to meet have understood something of this special aspect of their profession, and have therefore approached it with reverence. They realize that the job of making people come alive on the printed page or via any of the arts is a dedicated one, even when it is done in terms of comedy. For the best of stories is an artifice that becomes more real than reality, and so borders on, nay touches the infinite.